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#1 FREE DAILY NEWSPAPER IN CENTER CITY

THE CHOICE OF A NEW GENERATION? {page 12}

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PHILADELPHIA
Tuesday, December 11, 2012

PROVIDED

Beer. Holiday suds

▶ Our beer writer toured Troegs brewery in Hershey, sipping on a couple Mad Elfs. {page 02}

If naughty enough, maybe Mad Elf will be under the tree

Mummers' floats burn in huge Two Street blaze

- Three homes also damaged along iconic New Years party boulevard
- No cause yet for midday flames at warehouse owned by Fralinger String Band {page 04}

local

City bike share plans with 100 stations by 2014

- High-tech initiative would stretch from river to river and have about 1,000 bicycles {page 04}

Cataldi: Finally a good win {page 19-20}

Santa's special hooch

Toys aren't the only thing the elves are cooking up in Santa's Workshop Troeg's seasonal treat is so tasty, Rudolph might just need a designated driver to help guide St. Nick's sleigh

If you think you're too old for Christmas, then you never met the Mad Elf.

He is the stuff of legends: a crazy, drunken deranged elf that pours perfectly into an oversized wine goblet. The Mad Elf is a Belgian-style ale brewed with honey and cherries — oh, and it weighs in at a whopping 11-percent ABV. It's basically liquid Christmas in a bottle, to borrow a phrase from its creator.

"A lot of holiday beers are spicy or taste like gingerbread cookies," said Jeff Herb, media and communications coordinator for Troegs Brewery in Hershey. "Mad Elf is this chewy, 11 percent, cherry, sweet but a little bit sour. … It's its own thing."

The story goes like this: Back in 2001, founders John and Chris Troegner wanted to create a festive, holiday beer. Before they had even concocted a recipe, a friend came up with the name, Mad Elf. Then, someone sketched a crosseyed elf with a wicked smile on a cocktail napkin. No one at the table could have predicted the hysteria over that jolly, inebriated elf.

"They had no idea it would become as popular as it has," Herb said. "That first year, they did such a small run because they didn't know how much they would sell and it was so expensive to make. It sold out immediately."

Troegs Brewery, which opened in Harrisburg in 1997, only brews Mad Elf once a year. Bottles are released in mid-October followed by the draft version around Thanksgiving. By the first week of December, the brewery's general store was sold out.

"Each year it gets crazier and crazier," Herb said, noting that each year they increase production. "As soon as people find out about it, people are running in and grabbing 2-3 cases apiece."

The Mad Elf takes about six weeks to make, from fermentation to bottle. That's double the time it takes to brew a normal beer. Herb said he's been fielding e-mails about its release date since the summer.

"It's one of those beers people go apes— about," he said.

Part of the appeal is the taste, but another huge component is the exclusivity. It's only available for a little more than two months a year.

"I think it would sell year-round but it's one of those things where if you put out a beer year-round, it kind of loses its appeal or the excitement factor," Herb said. "It's like waking up Christmas morning and knowing what you're getting."

MIKE GREGER
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Expansion not in plans

There are no plans to expand right now. Troegs is available in eight states (Pennsylvania, New York, Virginia, Ohio, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Jersey, Delaware) and Washington, D.C.

They are brewing 40,000 barrels a year with the capacity to produce 100,000. They reel off 100 bottles per minute.

John Troegner is listed as head brewmaster, but the company employs seven full-time brewmasters.

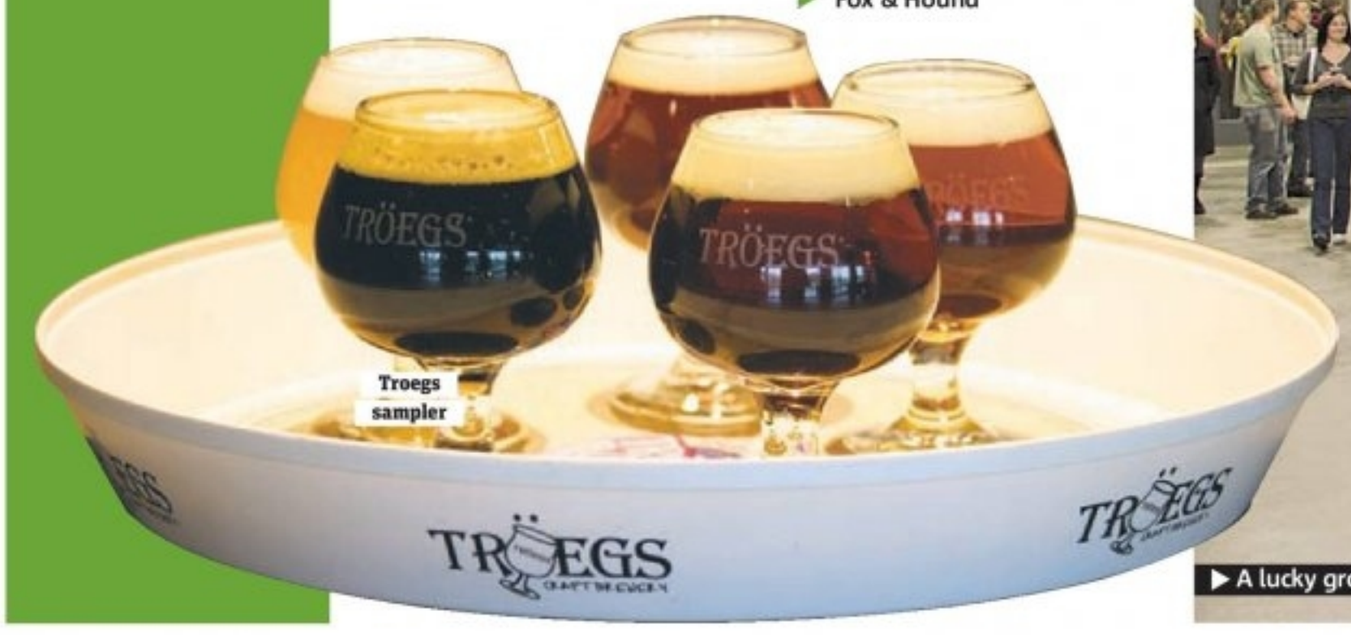
Quoted

"It's one of those beers that people go apes— about."
JEFF HERB

Unearthed

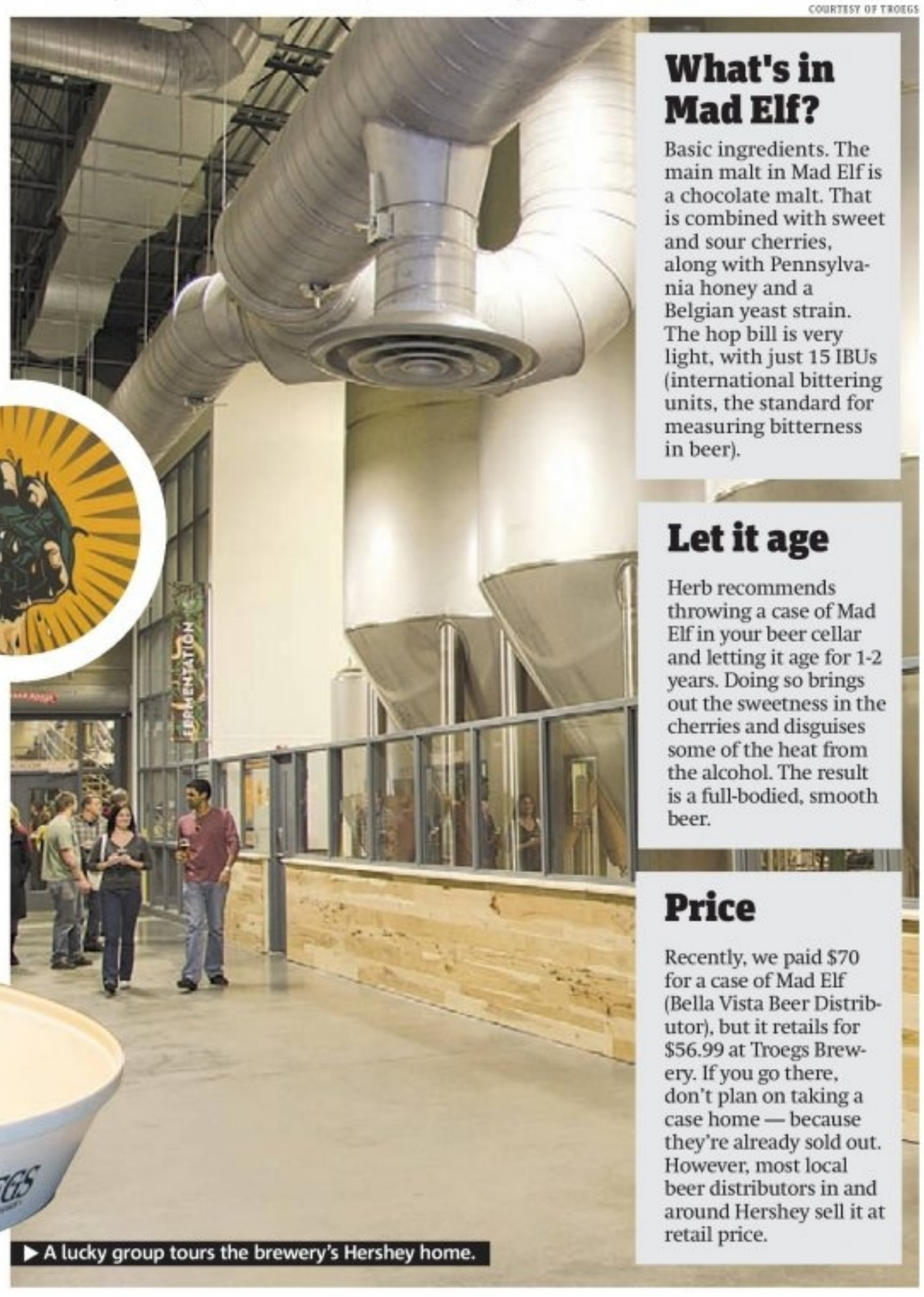
Bars pouring Mad Elf Ale on draft (per www.phillytapfinder.com):

- City Tap House
- For Pete's Sake
- Institute
- Jose Pistola's
- Perch Pub
- Standard Tap
- Daly's Irish Pub
- Kennett
- Royal Tavern
- Wrap Shack
- 2nd Street Brew House
- Irish Pol
- Kite & Key
- London Grill
- Field House
- Fox & Hound



Troegs sampler

COURTESY OF TROEGS



▶ A lucky group tours the brewery's Hershey home.

What's in Mad Elf?

Basic ingredients. The main malt in Mad Elf is a chocolate malt. That is combined with sweet and sour cherries, along with Pennsylvania honey and a Belgian yeast strain. The hop bill is very light, with just 15 IBUs (international bittering units, the standard for measuring bitterness in beer).

Let it age

Herb recommends throwing a case of Mad Elf in your beer cellar and letting it age for 1-2 years. Doing so brings out the sweetness in the cherries and disguises some of the heat from the alcohol. The result is a full-bodied, smooth beer.

Price

Recently, we paid $70 for a case of Mad Elf (Bella Vista Beer Distributor), but it retails for $56.99 at Troegs Brewery. If you go there, don't plan on taking a case home — because they're already sold out. However, most local beer distributors in and around Hershey sell it at retail price.

In the news

Glued shut

A Pennsylvania man allegedly broke into his ex-girlfriend's Dauphin County apartment last month and glued her refrigerator shut, according to a report from the Harrisburg Patriot-News. Police said Dennis Michael Homberg, 42 broke into the home in Lykens, Pa., on Nov. 12 and used glue to seal shut the fridge door and a utensil drawer.

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In the news

Bike share could be riding into Philly

Several years after embracing car sharing, Philadelphians could soon be able to swap bicycles.

City officials said they are ready to move forward with a program that would allow riders to borrow bicycles for short trips in and around the city. The Nutter Administration plans to ask City Council's approval for $3 million for a program that would feature between 1,000 and 1,200 bicycles at about 100 stations by 2014, according to Andrew Stober, chief of staff for the Mayor's Office of Transportation and Utilities.

27 Bike share systems in the country, while 48 others could start by 2014, according to Russell Meddin, founder of Bike Share Philadelphia

Riders would likely be able to get a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly membership with no charge for the first half-hour, and then a fee that would increase for each additional half-hour. Stober said stations would be spread from the Delaware River to 41st Street in West Philadelphia, from Washington Avenue to Spring Garden and all around Temple University.

In addition to using credit and debit cards, riders would also be able to swipe their cell phones at the stations — something currently not available in other U.S. cities. METRO/SDL

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Mummers vow fire will not knock them out of parade

CHARLES MOSTOLLER/METRO

▶ Fralinger's captain said: "It's going to take a lot of work, but we'll get there. We will bounce back."

A four-alarm fire yesterday destroyed a South Philadelphia garage that housed the bulk of the Fralinger String Band's equipment, less than two months before the Mummers' annual New Year's Day performance.

"It's where we build props and where we build scenery for show," said Fralinger captain Thomas D'Amore, who said the industrial garage at Two and Wharton streets also housed an auto body shop. "We lost a good chunk of money, but we're fortunate none of our members were inside."

Firefighters first saw smoke coming from the autobody shop shortly before 2:15 p.m. and had to cut a hole in a garage door to gain entry, according to Fire Commissioner Lloyd Ayers. Inside, several cars were ablaze and the situation was "untenable."

"By the time they were in, the fire had advanced to the point where they had to make a decision to get out," Ayers said. "And it was a good decision." Within an hour, the fire had been called to four alarms and a rear wall of the warehouse collapsed.

D'Amore said he's already received calls from several other Mummers groups offering to lend a hand. "It's really close-knit within the Mummers," he said. "It wouldn't surprise me if everybody helps in some way. We're a brotherhood."

ALEX WIGGLESWORTH
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Other casualties

Three neighboring rowhomes were evacuated as the fire spread — one was severely damaged and a second was being investigated for possible structural instability. A woman in the first home was hospitalized for smoke inhalation but is in stable condition, according to Ayers.

The fire was complicated by the volume of equipment in Fralinger's warehouse, according to Ayers, especially flammable materials like glue and paint. "There were several explosions early on starting a half hour into the fire, with the last one a half hour ago," he said yesterday evening. The fire was contained, but not yet under control.

RIKARD LARMA/METRO

▶ The fire spread to neighboring houses.

Does your child have symptoms of Bipolar Disorder?

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If so, please contact us to learn about a research study of an investigational bipolar medication for children.

Qualified participants must:

- Be 12 to 17 years of age
- Have a parent or caregiver that is willing to provide support during the research study

Those who qualify receive all study-related care and study medication at no cost, plus compensation for time and travel.

For more information, please contact **Dr. David Krefetz** at *111 North 49th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19139,* call toll-free **1.866.638.2656**

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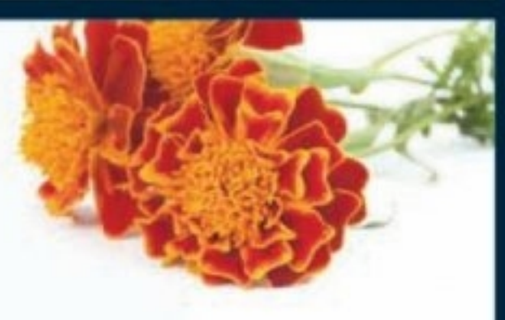

Do you suffer from major depressive disorder?

You may qualify for a clinical research study evaluating an investigational medication if you:

- Are between 18 and 70 years of age,
- Have been diagnosed with depression, and
- Your current antidepressant is not relieving all of your symptoms.

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Metro Magic toy drive

1 Log on to **www.metro.us** and look for the Metro Magic logo at the top left.

2 One click on the logo will take you to a "wish list" we have set up via a secure link on **Toysrus.com**. Once there, you can see all the toys we've already requested, with more added daily.

▶ All the gifts purchased will be sent directly to Metro's office **(30 S. 15th St. 14th floor, Philadelphia, 19102).** It's the third year of Metro Magic, where we ask our readers to go online to buy toys for underprivileged children. **METRO**

News in brief

GETTY IMAGES

Obama accepts corporate funding for inauguration

WASHINGTON. President Barack Obama's inauguration committee is accepting corporate donations to help fund the parade and other events associated with his Jan. 21 inauguration after tapped-out Democratic donors spent huge sums helping him get elected.

The move is a shift for Obama, who did not accept corporate donations for his first inauguration in January 2009.

Aides from the Presidential Inaugural Committee confirmed it would accept money from "individual and institutional" givers to help cover the cost of public events not paid for by taxpayers. **REUTERS**

Safe havens in Pakistan prevent insurgents' defeat

WASHINGTON. Safe havens in northwest Pakistan prevent U.S., allied and Afghanistan forces from dealing a "decisive defeat" to insurgents, according to the Pentagon's latest assessment.

Pakistan-based sanctuary for insurgents such as the Haqqani network, as well as the financial and operational support insurgents receive from various sources, keep security volatile along Afghanistan's eastern border, the Defense Department said today in a semi-annual report required by Congress.

The report provides an unclassified snapshot of the war in Afghanistan as the Obama administration prepares to assess how many of the remaining 66,000 troops will be withdrawn next year. **BLOOMBERG**

Nutter, other Pa. mayors worry of local 'fiscal cliff'

Mayor Michael Nutter and four other Pennsylvania mayors yesterday called on Congress to ensure that new revenue sources are a part of any "fiscal cliff" agreement negotiated in Washington.

"It's clear to everyone you cannot just cut your way out of the level of debt and deficit this government is facing," Nutter said. He said that without adding new sources of government income, "cities, counties and school districts all across Pennsylvania and the country will, unfortunately, bear the brunt of the reductions."

Two laws set to change at the end of this year would end temporary payroll tax reductions and enact cuts agreed on in the debt ceiling deal of 2011. The combination of higher taxes and reduced spending, if unchecked, could result in sharp cuts to government services and a rise in people who need them. Congress is currently debating how to soften the blow.

"In the city of Philadelphia, the cuts that are scheduled to take place in January would have a severely negative impact in a variety of areas," Nutter said, including public health, education and foreclosure counseling. **METRO/AW**

Quoted

"It's clear to everyone you cannot just cut your way out of the level of debt and deficit this government is facing." NUTTER

By the numbers

If Congress does nothing, according to Nutter:

98 Percent of Pennsylvania families who make $250,000 or less per year who will see their taxes go up

$1.6M Increase in the city's homeless spending if cuts to housing services preclude more than 80 homeowners facing foreclosure from receiving counseling

30 Teachers and class aides who could lose their jobs because of education cuts

400 Head Start slots for low-income students that could disappear because of program cuts

$1M Cost of Defense Department grants in jeopardy

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CONDITION, COMPETE, AS YOU GET OLDER, GOOD CALLS TO MAKE. BUT DON'T FORGET TO VACCINATE.

ZOSTAVAX® (Zoster Vaccine Live) is available at certain pharmacies and medical practices. Talk to your health care professional or visit FIND*ZOSTAVAX*.com for more information.

Now's the time to help prevent Shingles with ZOSTAVAX.

ZOSTAVAX is a vaccine that helps prevent Shingles in adults 50 years of age or older. Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. The virus stays in your body and can resurface at any time as Shingles—a painful, blistering rash. And no matter how healthy you feel, your risk increases as you get older.

The sooner you get vaccinated with ZOSTAVAX, the better your chances of protecting yourself from Shingles. In fact, the ACIP* of the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) recommends that appropriate adults 60 years of age and older get vaccinated to help prevent Shingles.

Talk to your health care professional to see if ZOSTAVAX is right for you.

ZOSTAVAX is given as a single shot. ZOSTAVAX cannot be used to treat Shingles, or the nerve pain that may follow Shingles, once you have it. For more information, visit ZOSTAVAX.com or call 1-877-9 SHINGLES.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the Patient Information on the adjacent page for more detailed information.

*ACIP=Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices

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VACC-1016603-0042 10/12

ABOUT ZOSTAVAX

ZOSTAVAX is a vaccine that is used for adults 50 years of age or older to prevent Shingles (also known as zoster).

Important Safety Information

- ZOSTAVAX does not protect everyone, so some people who get the vaccine may still get Shingles.
- You should not get ZOSTAVAX if you are allergic to any of its ingredients, including gelatin or neomycin, have a weakened immune system, take high doses of steroids, or are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. You should not get ZOSTAVAX to prevent chickenpox.
- Talk to your health care professional if you plan to get ZOSTAVAX at the same time as PNEUMOVAX®23 (Pneumococcal Vaccine Polyvalent) because it may be better to get these vaccines at least 4 weeks apart.
- Possible side effects include redness, pain, itching, swelling, hard lump, warmth, or bruising at the injection site, as well as headache.
- ZOSTAVAX contains a weakened chickenpox virus. Tell your health care professional if you will be in close contact with newborn infants, someone who may be pregnant and has not had chickenpox or been vaccinated against chickenpox, or someone who has problems with their immune system. Your health care professional can tell you what situations you may need to avoid.

Before you get Shingles, get vaccinated.

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Patient Information about ZOSTAVAX® (pronounced "ZOS tah vax") Generic name: Zoster Vaccine Live 9989115

You should read this summary of information about ZOSTAVAX before you are vaccinated. If you have any questions about ZOSTAVAX after reading this page, you should ask your health care provider. This information does not take the place of talking about ZOSTAVAX with your doctor, nurse, or other health care provider. Only your health care provider can decide if ZOSTAVAX is right for you.

What is ZOSTAVAX and how does it work?
ZOSTAVAX is a vaccine that is used for adults 50 years of age or older to prevent shingles (also known as zoster).

ZOSTAVAX contains a weakened chickenpox virus (varicella-zoster virus).

ZOSTAVAX works by helping your immune system protect you from getting shingles.

If you do get shingles even though you have been vaccinated, ZOSTAVAX may help prevent the nerve pain that can follow shingles in some people. ZOSTAVAX does not protect everyone, so some people who get the vaccine may still get shingles.

ZOSTAVAX cannot be used to treat shingles, or the nerve pain that may follow shingles, once you have it.

What do I need to know about shingles and the virus that causes it?
Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. Once you have had chickenpox, the virus can stay in your nervous system for many years. For reasons that are not fully understood, the virus may become active again and give you shingles. Age and problems with the immune system may increase your chances of getting shingles.

Shingles is a rash that is usually on one side of the body. The rash begins as a cluster of small red spots that often blister. The rash can be painful. Shingles rashes usually last up to 30 days and, for most people, the pain associated with the rash lessens as it heals.

Who should not get ZOSTAVAX?
You should not get ZOSTAVAX if you:
- are allergic to any of its ingredients.
- are allergic to gelatin or neomycin.
- have a weakened immune system (for example, an immune deficiency, leukemia, lymphoma, or HIV/AIDS).
- take high doses of steroids by injection or by mouth.
- are pregnant or plan to get pregnant.

You should not get ZOSTAVAX to prevent chickenpox.

Children should not get ZOSTAVAX.

How is ZOSTAVAX given?
ZOSTAVAX is given as a single dose by injection under the skin.

What should I tell my health care provider before I get ZOSTAVAX?
You should tell your health care provider if you:
- have or have had any medical problems.
- take any medicines, including non-prescription medicines, and dietary supplements.
- have any allergies, including allergies to neomycin or gelatin.
- had an allergic reaction to another vaccine.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- are breast-feeding.

Tell your health care provider if you expect to be in close contact (including household contact) with newborn infants, someone who may be pregnant and has not had chickenpox or been vaccinated against chickenpox, or someone who has problems with their immune system. Your health care provider can tell you what situations you may need to avoid.

Can I get ZOSTAVAX with other vaccines?
Talk to your health care provider if you plan to get ZOSTAVAX at the same time as the flu vaccine.

Talk to your health care provider if you plan to get ZOSTAVAX at the same time as PNEUMOVAX®23 (Pneumococcal Vaccine Polyvalent) because it may be better to get these vaccines at least 4 weeks apart.

What are the possible side effects of ZOSTAVAX?
The most common side effects that people in the clinical studies reported after receiving the vaccine include:
- redness, pain, itching, swelling, hard lump, warmth, or bruising where the shot was given.
- headache

The following additional side effects have been reported with ZOSTAVAX:
- allergic reactions, which may be serious and may include difficulty in breathing or swallowing. If you have an allergic reaction, call your doctor right away.
- chickenpox
- fever
- hives at the injection site
- joint pain
- muscle pain
- nausea
- rash
- rash at the injection site
- swollen glands near the injection site (that may last a few days to a few weeks)

Tell your health care provider if you have any new or unusual symptoms after you receive ZOSTAVAX. For a complete list of side effects, ask your health care provider.

Call 1-800-986-8999 to report any exposure to ZOSTAVAX during pregnancy.

What are the ingredients of ZOSTAVAX?
Active Ingredient: a weakened form of the varicella-zoster virus.

Inactive Ingredients: sucrose, hydrolyzed porcine gelatin, sodium chloride, monosodium L-glutamate, sodium phosphate dibasic, potassium phosphate monobasic, potassium chloride.

This page summarizes important information about ZOSTAVAX. If you would like more information, talk to your health care provider or visit the website at www.ZOSTAVAX.com or call 1-800-622-4477.

Rx only

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McD's gathers in the gold; Gmail gets glitchy

McRevenue

▶ The golden arches once again live up to their color.

SPENCER PLATT/GETTY IMAGES

McDonald's sales helped by $1 meals

McDonald's Corp.'s sales at established restaurants rose more than expected in November as a renewed emphasis on low-priced menu options, such as $1 Sausage McMuffins and coffee, helped the company bounce back from a rare decline in October, the company said yesterday. Sales at restaurants open at least 13 months were up 2.4 percent in November, easily topping the tepid 0.17 percent increase expected by analysts polled by Consensus Metrix. Still, analysts said it was too early to say that the world's biggest restaurant chain, known for its french fries and Big Macs, had regained its strong lead over rival fast-food chains. "One month does not a trend make ... but it's a nice sign to see them rebound after a horrible October," ITG Investment Research analyst Steve West said. In October, McDonald's posted its first monthly drop in the closely watched performance measure in nine years. **REUTERS**

First in (bumper) fight

NC barred from issuing 'pro life' license plates

A federal judge has permanently blocked North Carolina from issuing an anti-abortion specialty license plate, ruling that offering plates with a "Choose Life" slogan without an alternative supporting abortion rights is unconstitutional.

The lack of a plate promoting reproductive freedom in the state constitutes "view-point discrimination in violation of the First Amendment," Senior U.S. District Judge James C. Fox said.

The judge had previously granted a preliminary injunction sought by the ACLU of North Carolina. **REUTERS**

Hospitalized hero

Mandela to undergo more hospital tests

Nelson Mandela, the 94-year-old former South African president and revered anti-apartheid leader, is set to undergo more hospital tests after having a good rest on his second night in the facility, the government said.

A statement from the office of President Jacob Zuma gave no details other than to say, "President Mandela had a good night's rest" and was "in good hands."

It also thanked members of the public for their messages of support. **REUTERS**

New year, new bombs

Israel: Iran's nukes must be dealt with

Iran is getting ever closer to being able to build a nuclear bomb and the problem will have to be confronted in 2013, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said yesterday.

Israeli officials would like the United States to take the lead in a military assault on Iran's nuclear sites, but say in private they would go it alone if necessary, describing a nuclear-armed Iran as an existential threat to the Jewish state.

Speaking to foreign journalists, Netanyahu said Israel was sticking to the red line he laid down in September. **REUTERS**

1 According to Israel, Iran could have enriched enough uranium to produce just one bomb by the spring or summer of 2013.

Google glitch

Gmail hit with technical problems

Several Google Inc. Web products, including the popular Gmail service, appeared to go dark for users on several continents yesterday.

Google confirmed that "service disruptions" had affected Gmail and Google Drive, its online storage service.

The two products are part of Google's Apps suite. By 1:10 p.m., Google's Apps Dashboard monitoring service reported that Gmail and Drive service had resumed.

The company did not specify how many users were affected, but the outage prompted widespread complaints on social media on both coasts in the U.S. and other major markets. **REUTERS**

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CYNTHIA M. REED

By the numbers

$91,300
Average household income among employed Metro readers

42
Median age of the Metro reader

Bucking the trend: Metro leads the way

▶ Tony Metcalf, Metro US editor-in-chief, added: "We are thrilled that Metro US's hard work and dedication is paying off. Beyond distributing copies at the right time and place, our mission is to engage young, affluent people in a meaningful way that fits their busy urban life."

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There's a common perception that newspapers are dying at the hands of the Internet and the cell phone.

Yet newly released figures about the readership of Metro newspapers in the United States show that the doom-mongers have got it badly wrong.

While America's big paid-for newspapers are struggling badly, Metro, the No. 1 free daily in the country, goes from strength to strength.

The latest readership survey, conducted by Scarborough Research, shows that Metro is the most-read newspaper among employed adults ages 18 to 49 who work or live in Manhattan, Boston Proper and Philadelphia City Center.

The figures also show increases for Metro US in all three cities in which the paper is published. Metro US readership increased by 16 percent year over year to an all-time record of 1.3 million daily readers and 2.5 million weekly readers in three of the top media markets in the United States.

Metro launched in Philadelphia in 1999 and debuted in Boston in 2001. The New York edition followed in 2004. Despite industry-wide declines in advertising and readership, Metro continues to gain momentum.

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And we provide creative, thoughtful, value-for-money solutions to advertisers, old and new.

"These smashing results further prove the success of Metro's free daily newspaper model. What was once an implausible idea is now the future of newspaper publishing" said Yggers Mortensen, Metro US publisher and CEO.

Metro readership

1,290,591
Daily readers ages 18+

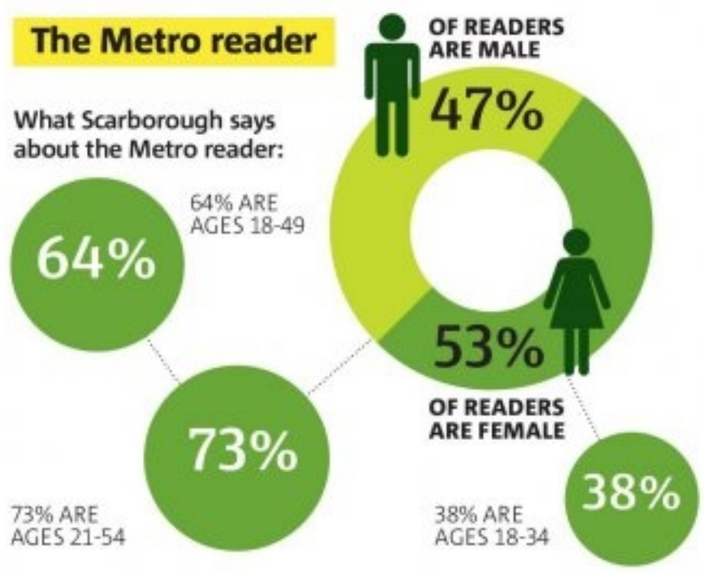
2,468,778
Weekly readers ages 18+

16%
Daily readership increase in the past year

Reader job stats

- **74%** are employed
- **59%** are full-timers
- **47%** are white-collared
- **32%** are managers/ professionals
- **59%** went to college
- **38%** are parents

The Metro reader



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High-profile residents receive cutting-edge care at Penn Museum

In the new Artifact Lab, conservators work on the fragile mummy collection Stop by for Q&A sessions

By the numbers

42,000
Number of artifacts from ancient Egypt in the Penn Museum

5,000
The oldest age of the any of the artifacts

125
Number of years the Penn Museum has been open

12
Weight in tons of the Egyptian sphinx in the museum

The Penn Museum has a major collection of objects from ancient Egypt. It's easy to see how some of them have survived for thousands of years — a huge granite sphinx isn't in danger of falling apart. But other artifacts are a lot more delicate, such as paintings, scrolls made of brittle papyrus and everyone's favorites — the cloth-wrapped mummies.

Now you can watch the museum's conservation staff work on these fragile mummies in a glass-fronted Artifact Lab, using tools that range from simple tweezers to high-powered microscopes. You can even ask questions during two half-hour sessions each day.

If you go

Penn Museum
3260 South St.
Q&A sessions in the Artifact Lab: 11:15 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tues.-Fri.; 1 and 3:30 p.m. Sat.-Sun.

Conservators are trained professionals who tend to museum objects, cleaning them as well as repairing damage and preventing further harm, explains Molly Gleeson, the principal conservator on the project. Gleeson's master's degree from UCLA prepared her to work with archaeological and ethnographic materials.

She's learning more about ancient Egypt specifically as she works with the curators at the museum, led by Dr. David Silverman, curator of the Egyptian section and a professor at Penn. In turn, the curators benefit from the information the conservators can provide from their scientific analyses of the materials used.

Can't go in person? Visit the blog at penn.museum/sites/artifactlab.

By combining the two kinds of information, the team can determine an item's age and authenticity — or, if it's a forgery, when it might have been done.

JUDY WEIGHTMAN
letters@metro.us

Education news

Rosemont welcomes 'small and mighty' new mascot

Rosemont College has undergone many changes since it went co-ed in 2009. One of those changes is the addition of a mascot for its athletic teams, the Ramblers. Renny the Raven was introduced to the college at an event that also featured the Phillie Phanatic and mascots from eight other local colleges.

People from across the college community submitted names, and the top five were voted on. Renny, which means "small and mighty" in Gaelic, was the clear choice. "The name ties into our new college tag line, 'The Power of Small,'" says Rosemont president Sharon Latchaw Hirsh.

The Phanatic was on hand to welcome Renny.

Swarthmore College receives $50M gift

Swarthmore College announced that alumnus Eugene Lang is giving the college a gift totaling $50 million, the largest in Swarthmore's history. The money will be used to build new science and engineering facilities. Swarthmore is unusual in liberal arts colleges in having a strong engineering program.

"Higher education in the 21st century will serve its students — and society — best if it focuses on knowledge design, real-world problem-solving and basic research," says Lang, chair emeritus of Swarthmore's Board of Managers.

Lang graduated from Swarthmore in 1938 at age 19 with a degree in economics and went on to study engineering. He has had an extremely successful career in technology transfer, working both in the private sector and as a government consultant.

Study: Americans prefer defense cuts to education cuts

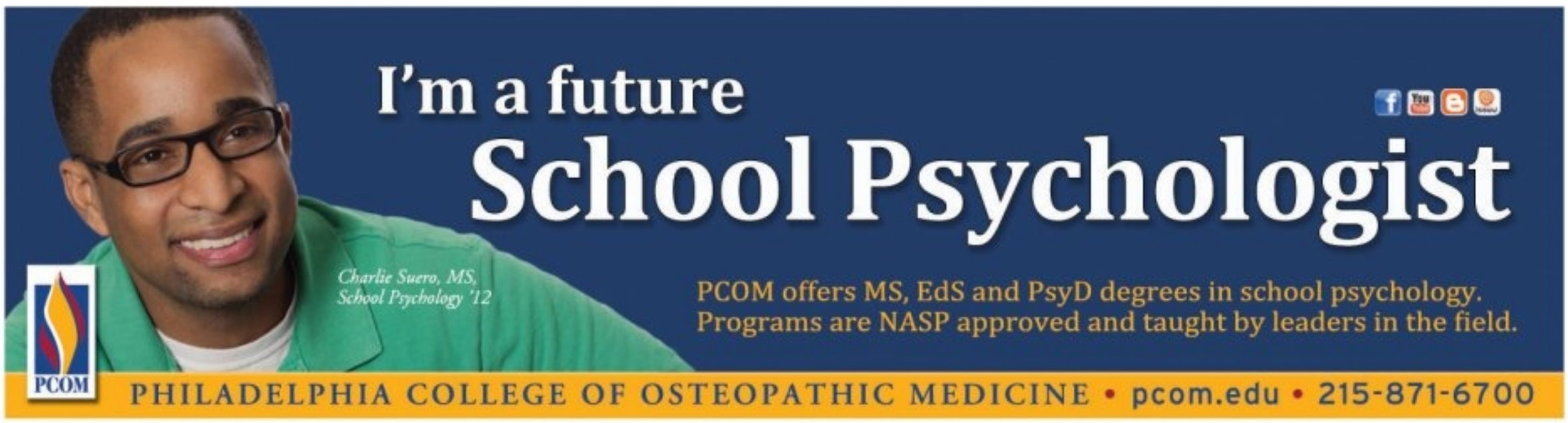
There are two options as we approach the fiscal cliff: raise taxes or cut funding. If it's necessary to cut funding to either defense or education, a majority of Americans would prefer cutting funding for defense, according to a new poll.

The poll, conducted Dec. 1-3, was commissioned by two advocacy groups, the Foundation for Education Investment and the Committee for Education Funding.

Fifty-seven percent of respondents think defense funding should be cut, while 43 percent support cuts to education. This is despite the fact that most respondents seriously overestimated the amount of the budget currently devoted to education: The average guess was 15 percent, whereas it's actually closer to 2 percent.

Forty-three percent said that the amount the federal government spends on education is "too little."

Respondents said it's "very important" to protect spending for special education for children with disabilities (57 percent) and grants to attend college (53 percent). METRO/JW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myentertainment

THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Beyonce: Now proudly brought you to by Pepsi

Pepsi is throwing a ton of cash — $50 million, to be exact — at **Beyonce** to make the singer the "face" of the company. Here's what the deal includes:

- Beyonce's face will be found on limited-edition cans starting in March.
- The singer will be featured in TV commercials, the biggest of which will debut after her Super Bowl XLVII halftime performance on Feb. 3. She will also appear in the usual media: billboards, magazine advertisements, etc.
- Pepsi will sponsor her tour.
- And here's where the deal might become an interesting collaboration: Pepsi will fund Beyonce's creative whims, which might not have explicit connection to the soda giant, per The New York Times. This might mean live events, videos, "a cool photo shoot" or anything that Beyonce might think of, said Lee Anne Callahan-Longo, the general manager of Parkwood Entertainment, Beyonce's company.

Is anyone else surprised by this collaboration? I know it's hard to say no to $50 million, but soda is bad, y'all. Isn't she worried about having to help shill something that is known to cause widespread health problems? Or am I just being all **Michael Bloomberg** about this? And, even looking past lending her image to a can of sugar, isn't Pepsi the No. 2 can of sugar? Leave Pepsi to **Kelly Rowland**, girl! You're a Coca-Cola star all the way.

"Pepsi embraces creativity and understands that artists evolve. As a businesswoman, this allows me to work with a lifestyle brand with no compromise and without sacrificing my creativity."
BEYONCE

Beyonce: now shilling sugar

Moore is off the hook in Miami

Demi Moore is hitting Miami in a big way. The actress has been spotted around town multiple nights in a row at nightclubs and hot spots, living it up until the wee hours, according to Us Weekly. "The whole table was drinking," a source says after seeing Moore's gang kick off a recent night at club FDR. "She sat between two guys and was laughing, having fun." The group then hit up several other clubs before arriving at Rec Room around 4 a.m. "They were all starving," the source says. "They sat in the club eating burgers and fries and drinking beer until the club closed and the lights went on." While Moore's partying has led to problems before, including hospitalization and a stint in rehab earlier this year, a friend insists everything's fine, telling the magazine that the actress is "in a good place" and "open to experiencing new things this year."

▶ One of Demi Moore's weekend party buddies included Lenny Kravitz.

The feed ...

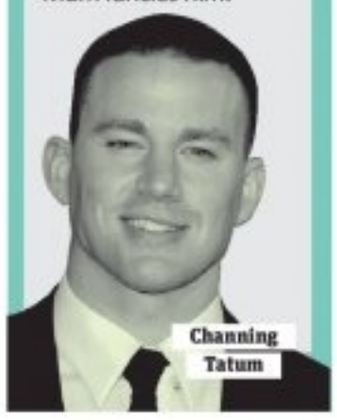
▶ **Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.**

Today, Pink is hoping for gladder tidings this season, Channing Tatum is getting very specific with his praise and Russell Brand is feeling adventurous.

@Pink
I'm wishing everyone a little more tolerance this year in their stocking. For the new year. For Chanukah. Whatever you celebrate. After reading some of your responses to my happy Chanukah last night, I feel tolerance is something a lot of you need.

@channingtatum
Big thanks to the kids in Ms. Ochoa's 5th grade class at Poway's Valley Elementary! Great job on your project!

@rustyrockets
Anyone who does the (traumatic) Sydney Bridge Climb today tell "Bernie" the guide my Mum fancies him.



Channing Tatum

Talking points

One Direction is cool with Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift's latest romance with **Harry Styles** gets the seal of approval from Styles' One Direction bandmate **Louis Tomlinson**, according to Us Weekly. "I'm happy they're good friends," Tomlinson coyly tells the magazine. "She's a really lovely girl." Given the amount of time Swift has spent recently with Styles — and the rest of the band, by extension — he's certainly had a chance to get a good impression.

Australian DJs 'shattered, gutted'

The Australian DJs whose prank call led to the apparent suicide of one of **Kate Middleton**'s nurses are speaking out for the first time, appearing on Australia's "Today Tonight" just hours before it was announced their radio show has been canceled. "I'm shattered, gutted, heartbroken," **Michael Christian** says of the the fallout from his and co-host **Mel Greig**'s prank. "I had the idea. It was just a simple harmless phone call. It was going to go on for 30 seconds. We were going to get hung up on." But it went further than that, leading to the death of **Jacintha Saldanha**, the nurse who had taken the call. "The first thing I asked was, 'Was she a mother?'" says Greig. "If we played any involvement in her death, then we're very sorry. We couldn't foresee what was going to happen."

Doherty calls 911 after suicidal fan reaches out

Celebrities often say they care about their fans, but **Shannen Doherty** means it. The former "Beverly Hills 90210" star called 911 from L.A. recently to get help for a Twitter follower in New Jersey whom Doherty believed was suicidal, according to TMZ. "This is going to sound incredibly strange," Doherty says on the 911 call, obtained by the website. "My name is Shannen Doherty and I'm an actress, and there is a girl who is threatening to shoot herself." The unidentified 27-year-old woman had sent Doherty messages on Twitter claiming she would kill herself if Doherty didn't call her on the phone. "My security guys told me to block her because she's aggressive and does very erratic things," Doherty says on the emergency call. "I felt bad for her, to be honest."

▶ Doherty

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Marina: 'I'm not like them'

The Diamonds singer on trying to be a pop star and getting discouraging phone calls from her manager

Upon releasing her 2010 debut, it was apparent to anyone paying attention that Marina Diamandis, aka Marina and the Diamonds, was a bona fide pop star in the making. She had the acrobatic voice, indelible hooks and a crush-worthy look (more on that in a minute), but there was a knowingness about the idea of pop stardom embedded in her lyrics that made her appealing to fans who take their pop with a dash of irony. On her recent release, "Electra Heart," the Welsh singer has doubled-down on reaching for the stars, enlisting hit-makers like Diplo and Dr. Luke.

It's Dr. Luke's effort on first single, "How to be a Heartbreaker" that has brought on Katy Perry comparisons, albeit with qualifiers like "edgier."

Is that a compliment or an insult? "It's neither," says Diamandis. "It's just not true. The thing is, with Dr. Luke, his style is so cemented, I think most people who work with him get his sound. Katy was his first huge success, so it's obvious I'm compared to her. I'm just like, 'Oh whatever.'"

CASPAR BALSLEY

▶ Really? Somebody thought this woman wasn't hot enough?

Also getting a big whatever was her label's decision in September to delay the release of the "Heartbreaker" video because, well, they didn't think she looked attractive enough.

She got a call from her manager saying the label didn't like it, she explains: "'They think you need some beauty work,' he said. 'I said, 'I don't care if they think I'm ugly or not, they need to give me a budget if they want me to look Botoxed within an inch of my life.'"

Not that she has a problem with that, she says. "I really don't mind. Everything on the album has been in the spirit of that plastic pop element."

A different sort of pop star

"Do you know the funny thing? I really wanted to be one," says Diamandis of being a pop star. "Now, after this album, even though it's obviously a pop album, a concerted effort and a very calculated move ... I'm still not one. I'm not like them, not in a horrible way, not like Katy or Rihanna or any of those big pop females."

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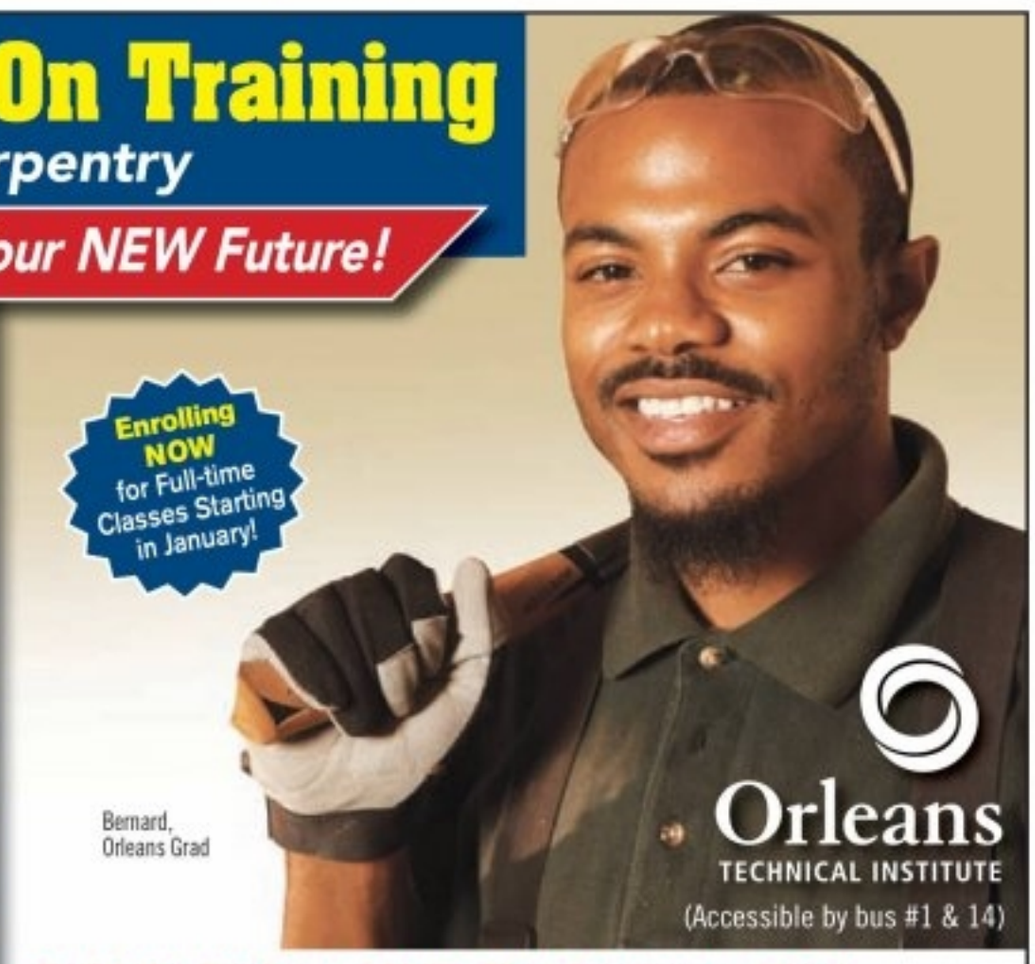

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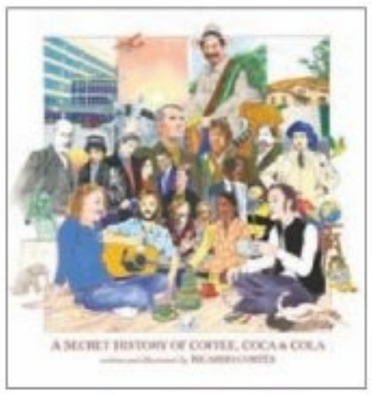
Chew on this

Ricardo Cortes explores the forbidden virtues of the coca leaf

AKASHIC BOOKS

Cortes says there's a reason Coke is it.

Ricardo Cortes' "A Secret History of Coffee, Coca & Cola" uses a combination of illustrations and investigative research to explore the relationship between three stimulants: coffee, coca leaves (from which cocaine is an alkaloid derivative) and Coca-Cola.



Cortes argues that coca plants were harmlessly enjoyed until becoming a casualty of the war on drugs that began with the 1930 appointment of U.S. drug czar Harry J. Anslinger, who spent most of his career leading the prohibition of coca while simultaneously helping the Coca-Cola Company secure access to it. Anslinger received political gain from the powerful support of the company. "He was giving a back-door to Coca-Cola for their product," says Cortes.

While you're at it, sip on some New Coke

Remember in 1985 when Coca-Cola shocked drinkers by changing the formula and rebranding it "New Coke"? Cortes believes the change was an effort by Coca-Cola to extract themselves from the political problems caused by using the coca leaf. But Coke won't talk. "They say the secret formula is their most valuable asset," he says. "That's why they can't talk about it."

The most fascinating illustrations in "Secret History" are of letters between Anslinger and Coca-Cola — rendered by Cortes from public documents. They chronicle how Coca-Cola has access to coca for use in its secret formula even as the U.S. wages war against the very same plants in South America.

"It's an investigation of rumors," says Cortes. "You can find information of Coca-Cola and coca leaf on Wikipedia. But I wanted to have all the primary sources that you could look back at."

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myparenting

Jewel on the moments with her son that sparkle

Pampers and Jewel are uniting to pay homage to the 'Millions of Beautiful Morning Moments' shared between parents and their babies

ALEX TEHRANI

▶ Jewel gives a hand to her 18-month-old son Kase.

On top of her professional obligations — she's a co-host and judge on "Platinum Hit" and the new spokeswoman for Pampers Baby Dry diapers — Jewel is also a mom to her 18-month-old son Kase and a wife to Ty Murray, the professional bull rider. But as you can tell from the following interview, her life is far from a rodeo.

If you could highlight one beautiful moment with your son, what would it be?

The morning is my favorite time with my baby. I thought it was just me and Kase. I just thought, "Wow, Kase is always in a great mood in the morning." Then I talked to other moms and realized it's everyone's favorite time with their baby. It's something kind of magical — they are just in a good mood and it's just fun to hang out with them. One of my favorite morning moments is getting to read with him.

Speaking of books, can you tell us a little bit about yours?

I wrote "That's What I'd Do" for Kase while I was still pregnant. I had written a children's record for him, too, called "The Merry Goes 'Round," full of little things I wanted to teach him. I try to use imaginative metaphors to show him all the ways I love him.

What do you think of the new season of "Dancing with the Stars"?

My husband and I watch it together. I still sometimes look over and think, "There's my cowboy husband, watching a dancing show." It still shocks me. Being on the show definitely gives you a new appreciation for how hard it is. He still gets fits of anxiety when he sees certain studios that he rehearsed in. He gets flashbacks and needs medication — only joking!

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advice

Survive winter travel delays

Just crossing your fingers won't help you avoid a flight delay or cancellation due to nasty weather

Five ways a savvy traveler can circumvent Mother Nature's wrath

Don't let this be you.

GETTY IMAGES

Bigger planes are more likely to fly: When the airlines have to cut flights to account for weather delays, it will be the smaller planes on shorter flights which are cut first. If you have a choice, take the bigger plane.

Early flights are on time more often: Delays build throughout the day. Crews running just an hour late may ultimately not be able to operate their last scheduled flight of the day because of regulations regarding the number of hours they can work. Flying earlier in the morning can help avoid those problems, but it may mean an early wake-up call.

Partner airlines may help you get where you're going: Planes are more full than ever these days — meaning once a flight is canceled, getting a seat on the next one will be incredibly difficult. Some airlines are more willing than others to work with other carriers to help get passengers to their final destination. Here's a quick look at some of their policies: Virgin America, Spirit and Southwest will almost never involve other airlines. JetBlue will occasionally work with American Airlines. The legacy carriers are most easily able to get other airlines involved. This doesn't mean that they will — not if weather is the cause of the delay — but that's generally the best chance customers have.

Some airports are on time more often

More runways means more likelihood of on-time operations. In the New York City area, for example, JFK is more likely to be close to on-time than LaGuardia or Newark, not that any of the three have great on-time ratings overall. And if you are forced to take a connection, look at the chances of weather impacting the connecting airport. Flying through Chicago in the winter is more likely to see a snowstorm impact your flight than connecting in Dallas or Houston.

Consider the club

Getting an airline club membership is often an expensive proposition. But when operations go pear-shaped having easier access to agents at the airport might make the difference between getting on the go and being stuck in the terminal. A number of credit cards include access to lounges in some form or another and, failing that, most U.S. airlines will sell a one-time access option for around $50. Just getting out of the mass of people in the terminal might make that worthwhile.

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Letters

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The universal blind spot: Bicyclists

As the sibling of a cyclist who was struck by a car and was blamed for the accident, I have many things to say about cycling in the city. What people need to realize is that it's not the cyclists or the roads that are the problem. It is simply the ignorance of drivers.

What bothers me about this is that drivers never get blamed fully. Drivers need to open their eyes and LOOK — for cars, pedestrians, cyclists, etc.

LIZ PAPI, VIA E-MAIL

The best holiday movie? 'Miracle on Capitol Hill'

Dear Santa: This Christmas I want for my elected representatives in Washington to stop their partisan antics and start problem-solving around that "fiscal cliff" issue that we have. I promise that I have been a good citizen all this past year, so getting this gift by year's end sure would be great. I know how efficiently and collaboratively you and your elves run the North Pole. Maybe we could get Congress to use a few of your tried-and-true strategies. For example, think about how all of you sit down together with honorable intentions, truly listen to each others' ideas and then turn the best of those ideas into a sound plan for delivering all the Christmas toys to all the children across America.

Thanks for everything, Santa, and let's hope Congress gets its act together.

CHIARA NUZZO, VIA E-MAIL

It's not just rich folks who find ways to make ends meet

RE: "THE BEST THINGS TAX RETURNS CAN BUY" (METRO, DEC. 10) Letter writer Christiane Geisler writes: "I am not jealous. I just love my parents and my children as much as rich folks do." Christiane, if you have to make that point you are jealous. "Rich folks" are not the only people who can afford to fly or to help financially with relatives in crisis. As a nonrich person, I have been on the receiving end of financial assistance from other nonrich relatives more times than I can count. I understand it must be hard having family that lives abroad and all over the U.S., but love is not measured in the cost of airline tickets. This is an obvious point, but you seem to resent those who can afford to do more than you can.

KEVIN METZ, VIA E-MAIL

Make the effort to save the planet

RE: "SANDY REPAIRS TO COST BILLIONS, CONGRESS TOLD" (METRO, DEC. 7-9) More severe weather is a reminder that we have opportunities now to diminish the effects of climate change.

We'll avoid some misery and save a bundle in the future if we invest in renewable energy and become energy efficient in transportation, housing, agriculture and manufacturing.

That's a tall order, but as Jimmy Cliff sings, "You can get it if you really want. But you must try, try and try."

PAUL EMILE ANDERS, VIA E-MAIL

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Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words.
Metro reserves the right to edit all letters.
Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** It's important for you to establish your own agenda instead of letting associates pick one. You'll know better what is best for you.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** If you're smart enough to recognize it, some information you possess could give you an edge in a competitive career development. Nothing will happen unless you make a move.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** Get out and mingle, because social gatherings should prove to be enjoyable, provided the group is small and the topics aren't of a serious nature.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** Certain goals can be much easier to attain if you first visualize successfully achieving them and the ways you go about doing so. Use your imagination.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** Because your words are likely to carry more weight, listeners will prick up their ears. Be careful you don't reveal anything unintended.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** Chances are you'll be more adept than usual at gauging the course of events. Use this gift to anticipate changes that may not be evident to others.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** Before signing any type of agreement, you should scrutinize the fine print. Chances are it'll be the little details that turn out to be of real significance, and they could make trouble.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** If you are on your toes and smarter than competitors, you'll fare quite well — especially when it comes to commercial involvements. Try to anticipate others' moves.

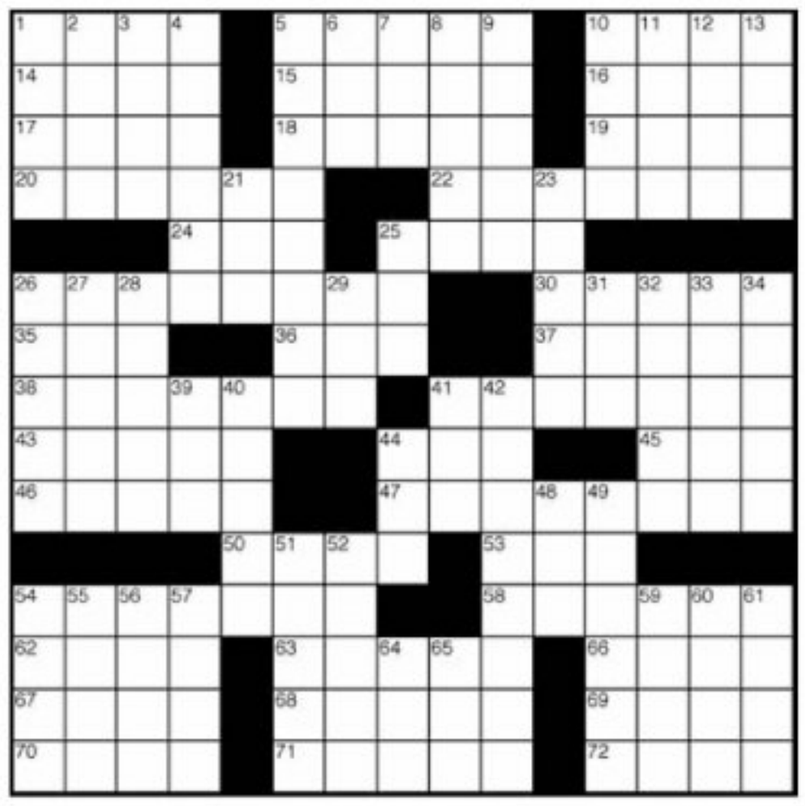
♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** It behooves you to be an attentive listener when engaged in a conversation with someone who is young at heart. Tips from this person could brighten your life considerably.

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** When there is something important you need to accomplish today, there's no need to broadcast it to the entire world. If you want to moan and groan about it, do so only after you've done the job.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** If you feel you have some good ideas that could benefit co-workers, try to do something about it, even if those who work at your side aren't too supportive. Even setting a good example could help.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** Even if you think in small monetary terms, that's OK, because modest profits could quickly add up to a tidy sum. A good attitude could help you find bargains that others overlook.

BERNICE BEDE OSOL



Across
1 Throngs
5 Strongly advised
10 France, long ago
14 Type of lock
15 Reunion attendee
16 All, in combos
17 Lighter- — -air
18 Beauty shop
19 Eight bits
20 Drum up business
22 What spies do
24 Ham on —
25 Mineral finds
26 Kept late hours (2 wds.)
30 — -bopper
35 Levin or Gershwin
36 Codgers' queries
37 Dome home
38 Great numbers
41 Husky
43 Give a leg up
44 Back again
45 Vintage auto
46 Declare invalid
47 Surpass
50 Aspirin target
53 Barely visible
54 Gander (hyph.)
58 Trace element in salt
62 Dashiell's peer
63 Loon, for one
66 Pesky bug
67 Vogue rival
68 "Someone Like You" singer
69 Ms. Bombeck
70 Clancy's Jack —
71 Unbending
72 Projection room unit

Down
1 Bullfinch topic
2 Molokai neighbor
3 Lesage hero Gil —
4 Guard
5 Lying fallow
6 Estuary
7 Toothpaste choice
8 Pierre's school
9 Overalls material
10 Desert of Asia
11 Tan and Grant
12 A law — itself
13 Debt securer
21 Caustic
23 In a ferment
25 JAMA readers
26 Lion, to Tarzan
27 Shop for clothes (2 wds.)
28 Burr or Spelling
29 Cousins of "um"
31 Kind of trip
32 Jovian moon
33 Makes mention of
34 Vacillates (hyph.)
39 Ames inst.
40 Globe substitute
41 Play about Capote
42 Like many stolen cars (hyph.)
44 Ally opposite
48 Mgmt. biggie
49 Account book
51 It repels moths
52 Fictional orphan
54 Ogle
55 Air France hub
56 Clay pot
57 Piercing
59 As to (2 wds.)
60 Specify
61 Term paper abbr. (2 wds.)
64 Really relax, slangily
65 Wallach or Lilly

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SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

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SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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Opinion

ANGELO CATALDI
THE VOICE OF THE PHILLY SPORTS FAN

NICK FOLES COULD SAVE REID'S JOB

Welcome to the NFL, Nick Foles. And thank you for offering some hope in this otherwise hopeless season. The Eagles ended their miserable eight-game losing streak Sunday in Tampa Bay with an improbable comeback.

Metro does not endorse the opinions of the author, or any opinions expressed on its pages. Opposing viewpoints are welcome. Send submissions to letters@metro.us.

The Eagles did it behind the steady hand and potent arm of the scruffy rookie, offering an early holiday gift to flustered fans — a reason to believe. Foles was impressive all afternoon, but he was downright amazing in the final moments, when he drove the Eagles down for two touchdowns in the last 3:55, including the pinpoint throw near the sideline that won the game as the clock expired.

Quoted

The Eagles did something good? The Eagles won a football game?

For a moment after Jeremy Maclin had secured the ball against his chest, it was hard to believe, really. So depressing was this last two months that the sudden rush of relief was an emotion that seemed totally new, refreshingly different. The Eagles did something good? The Eagles won a football game? Really?

Of course, with this exhilaration comes a gnawing concern. If Foles looks equally promising in the three remaining games, Andy Reid has a case for his return. Still regarded as a quarterback guru, Reid can argue that he handpicked Foles in the draft, brought him along quickly and has him already emerging as a potential star.

Reid can say he did the same thing in 1999 with a kid named Donovan McNabb and that journey led to five NFC championship games and a Super Bowl appearance. Who's to say owner Jeff Lurie won't look at Foles, consider the tragedy of Garrett Reid and decide to get his money's worth out of the $5.5 million he still owes the coach for 2013?

Lurie called the four victories that ended last season "fool's gold," and we can only hope he sees just as clearly the folly of a 15th season with Reid as coach. Foles or no Foles, a Reid return would be catastrophic, both for business and for the psyche of the city.

If the owner were in our WIP studios yesterday to take call after call of new-found hope, he would understand the gravity of the situation. People were jubilant that someone finally stepped up and won a football game for them. That it was a rookie calling the last two plays himself and then executing them flawlessly only sweetened the mood.

In fact, the consensus is that best moment of the comeback involved a ball Foles failed to complete. He had just threaded a pass over the middle to his new favorite target, Jason Avant, and somehow — in his fourth game as starter — got the entire offense 20 yards up the field to spike the ball with two seconds left.

In the weeks ahead, the naysayers will keep chirping about past flashes like Bobby Hoying, keep reminding everybody that one game doesn't prove anything. The only thing they will not be able to dismiss it the way Foles throws the football, and the way he runs an offense.

When this season mercifully ends, it will still be the most infuriating and disappointing in recent memory; make no mistake about that. But at least there's something to look forward to, some hope to embrace during the long, cold winter ahead.

*– **Angelo Cataldi** is the host of 94 WIP's Morning Show, which airs weekdays 5:30-10 a.m.*

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GETTY IMAGES

▶ Roseman should be looking for a new job in 2013.

Roseman doesn't 'get it'

Opinion

Phillies GM Ruben Amaro Jr. made two major trades, talked to dozens of agents and conducted countless interviews last week. Eagles GM Howie Roseman remained in a self-imposed seclusion, saying and doing nothing.

Amaro is aggressive and accessible. Roseman is paranoid and unreliable. Amaro is fan-friendly. Roseman would rather issue a statement than answer questions. Amaro is the best GM in Philadelphia right now. Roseman will be lucky to have a job next month.

▶ Amaro

So why is Amaro constantly fending off the wrath of the people, while Roseman has been out of sight and out of mind during the current crisis?

Last week Amaro acquired 24-year-old Ben Revere, a center fielder with lightning in his legs. In return, Minnesota got ordinary pitcher Vance Worley and so-so prospect Trevor May. Then he somehow convinced Texas to pay $10 million and give the Phillies veteran third baseman Michael Young, for two non-descript relievers.

The reaction to the deals was predictably negative. Revere is not as good as B.J. Upton, or Josh Hamilton or — gasp — Shane Victorino, blah, blah, blah. Young is too old, too brittle, too American League. It's all pure drivel.

In an interview last Friday, I asked Amaro why he remains so accessible, even when dealing with so much criticism. He said something that Howie Roseman should seriously consider in his future dealings.

"I grew up here," Ruben Amaro said. "I'm a fan, too. … I get it."

Yes, he does.

ANGELO CATALDI

Idle thoughts …

1 Flowers for Goodell. Roger Goodell is looking for a way to eliminate kickoffs, which he finds hazardous to player health. Somebody needs to tell him football is a contact sport. It is the most popular sport because of that. If he doesn't like the violence, he should open a flower shop.

2 Nothing to see here. The Eagles are ratings poison on prime-time TV. They drew the lowest numbers of the year on Monday Night Football two weeks ago, then among the lowest six nights later. The good news is that there should be plenty of 1 p.m. Sunday games next season.

3 The blame game. Trent Cole has recorded two sacks in the first 13 games this season, a total so abysmal that his future with the Eagles — and in football — are in jeopardy. How could a Pro-Bowl defensive end fall so far, so fast? And why hasn't he received more blame for this atrocious season? METRO/AC

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Opinion

Blame Bettman for this NHL labor mess

If you really want to understand why there is no hockey season this year — or why there was none seven years ago, either — just go back and listen to the tone of Gary Bettman's voice during his public tantrum late last Thursday night. It came after three days of fruitful labor talks, all of which were washed away by one ill-timed outburst.

"It's almost incomprehensible that he would say that," snarled the most miserable man in professional sports.

Believe it or not, the horrible crime against humanity that triggered Bettman's tirade was union boss Donald Fehr (no peach himself, by the way) saying he thought the two sides were getting close to an agreement. How dare Fehr suggest that fans might actually get to see some hockey this year. With Bettman around, there is very little chance of that.

GETTY IMAGES

▶ Bettman was annoyed that union boss Donald Fehr declared the two sides were close to an agreement.

8M Yearly salary for NHL commish Gary Bettman. He made $3.7 million in 2004-05.

The NHL has been taken hostage by a narrow-minded bully with a Napoleon complex, a greedy corporate manipulator who has no love for the sport he represents and no respect for the fans who fund it. He makes $8 million a year, and the only time there was any real progress in this five-month lockout was when Bettman was out of the room. This leads to an obvious question: Why is he still the commissioner?

The NHL owners are among the most successful businessmen in North America. They didn't get rich enough to buy a sports franchise by listening to an alarmist with the social skills of a grizzly bear.

It's time for the NHL to clear the final hurdle to lasting labor peace. It's time for Gary Bettman to go.

ANGELO CATALDI

NHL cancels more games

No, the two sides aren't close to an agreement.

The NHL announced yesterday that all games have been cancelled through Dec. 30. The NHLPA and the league have made no further progress in negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement.

With these latest cuts, the league has now lost 526 games, or 43 percent of the regular season. In 1995, the NHL reduced its regular season to 48 games after dealing with a lockout.

The two sides are expected to resume talking at some point this week, according to ESPN. They reportedly talked for three straight days last week but couldn't find a resolution. METRO

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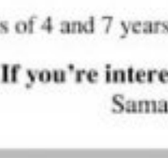

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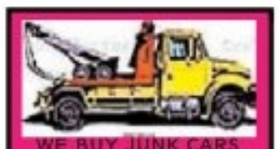

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